

Message Text

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 OMB-01 /072 W
-----065728 100819Z /15

R 100618Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3991
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEHRAN 7086

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, IR
SUBJ: RECENT DISSIDENT DECLARATIONS

REF: TEHRAN 6630, TEHRAN 6947 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: JUNE AND JULY HAVE SEEN AN ACCELERATION OF PUBLISHED PETITIONS OR DECLARATIONS BY IRANIAN DISSIDENTS REQUESTING MORE FREE EXPRESSION AND RELEVANT ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES IN IRANIAN GOVERNMENTAL PROCEDURES. THE GOVERNMENT SEEMS TO BE HUMORING THIS TREND AND IS TO A CERTAIN DEGREE CONTRIBUTING TO A GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF GREATER CIVIL LIBERTARIANISM, NOTABLY THROUGH DECLARATIONS OF TWO TOP RASTAKHIZ PARTY LEADERS WHO WERE AT THE TIME ALSO MINISTERS IN THE GOVERNMENT. END OF SUMMARY.

2. WE ARE AWARE OF AT LEAST THREE SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC PETITIONS OR DECLARATIONS BY DISSIDENTS. THE FIRST WAS AN OPEN LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER HOVEYDA ON JUNE 14 SIGNED BY SOME 40 IRANIANS WITH CLAIMS TO CULTURAL, ARTISTIC AND INTELLECTUAL PURSUITS. IT NOTED EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH
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AN INDEPENDENT WRITER'S ASSOCIATION IN THE PERIOD 1968-71 WHICH LED TO DISBANDING OF THE GROUP AND PROSECUTION OF MANY OF ITS MEMBERS. IT SUGGESTED THAT PERIODIC MEETINGS HOVEYDA HOLDS WITH WRITERS, EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS BELONGING TO AN OFFICIAL ORGANIZATION HAVE NOT ADEQUATELY REPLACED THAT ASSOCIATION. WE NOTE A COPY OF THIS LETTER WAS INCLUDED IN A LETTER TO SECRETARY VANCE SENT BY THE NEW YORK BASED "COMMITTED FOR

ARTISTIC AND INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM IN IRAN" ON JULY 8.

3. A DECLARATION WAS PUBLISHED JULY 11 SIGNED BY 60 ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW. IT REFERRED TO A CABLE SENT TO THE SPEAKER OF THE MAJLES PROTESTING THE HASTY PASSING OF BILLS ON MATTERS INVOLVING ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE WITHOUT GIVING SUFFICIENT OPPORTUNITY FOR OPPOSING VIEWS TO BE PRESENTED. THE DECLARATION--WHICH WE UNDERSTAND WAS INSPIRED BY SOME SPECIFIC COMPLAINTS WITH RECENT LEGISLATION--BROADENED INTO AN APPEAL FOR MORE RESPECT FOR "THE RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES OF THE IRANIAN PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY THEIR FREEDOM OF SPEECH, WRITING AND GATHERING."

4. A THIRD DOCUMENT IS A DECLARATION, DATED JULY 1, BY SOMETHING CALLED "THE RADICAL MOVEMENT OF IRAN." THIS DECLARATION IS NUMBERED AS THE 7TH IN A SERIES, BUT IT IS THE FIRST TO HAVE BEEN SENT ALSO TO THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR AND OTHERS AT THE EMBASSY. THE DECLARATION IS UNSIGNED, BUT IT IS GENERALLY KNOWN HERE THAT ITS FRAMERS ARE PROMINENT PEOPLE CONNECTED WITH THE OLD NATIONAL FRONT, A MOVEMENT WHICH DISAPPEARED FROM IRANIAN POLITICS A DECADE AGO. DECLARATION NO. 7 ENDS WITH FOUR DEMANDS OF WHAT IT CALLS THE "JOINT PROGRESSIVE POPULAR MOVEMENT." THESE INCLUDE:

(A) COMPLETE FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND PRESS AND ABOLITION OF ALL CENSORSHIP;

(B) DISSOLUTION OF THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT AND OF THE
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SINGLE POLITICAL PARTY AND PREPARATIONS FOR FREE ELECTIONS;

(C) INSURING THE JUDICIARY COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE AS PROVIDED BY CONSTITUTIONAL LAW;

(D) RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, RETURN OF EXILES, AND REHABILITATION WITH HONOR AND SOCIAL RIGHTS FOR ALL.

5. FULL TEXTS OF THE LATTER TWO DECLARATIONS BEING POUCHED TO THE DEPARTMENT (NEA/IRN).

6. STATEMENTS PRONOUNCING THE VIRTUE OF MORE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OPENNESS OF GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS WERE MADE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS IN JULY BY MINISTER OF ECONOMICS AND FINANCE ANSARY AND MINISTER OF STATE AND HEAD OF THE PLAN AND BUDGET ORGANIZATION MAJIDI, IN THEIR CAPACITIES AS LEADERS OF THE TWO ORGANIZATIONAL WINGS WITHIN THE RASTAKHIZ PARTY (SEE REFTELS).

7. WE HAVE ALSO NOTED CERTAIN STRAWS IN THE WIND SUCH AS THE SHAH'S GREETING OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM RELIGIOUS GROUPS ON HIS TRIPS OUTSIDE TEHRAN WHICH WERE REPORTED IN THE IRANIAN PRESS AND INDICATE CLOSE ATTENTION IS BEING PAID TO THESE DEVELOPMENTS AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE

GOI.

8. COMMENT: THERE IS OBVIOUSLY A CENTRAL THREAD RUNNING THROUGH THIS SUMMER'S PETITIONS, DECLARATIONS OR LETTERS. LATENT OPPOSITIONISTS TO THE GOI ARE ENCOURAGING EACH OTHER TO COMPOSE AND EVEN SIGN DOCUMENTS THEY WOULD NOT HAVE COMPOSED OR SIGNED A FEW MONTHS AGO. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT FROM WHAT WE ARE TOLD INFORMALLY THAT THEY ARE DRAWING ENCOURAGEMENT FROM SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USG AS WELL AS IN WESTERN EUROPE AND AMONG PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL GROUPS.

9. IT IS INTERESTING IN THIS CONNECTION THAT AMONG CANDIDATES THAT THE LOCAL RUMOR MILL HAD SUGGESTED MIGHT
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REPLACE PRIME MINISTER HOVEYDA (SEE SEPARATE EMBASSY REPORTING), THE NAME OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER ALI AMINI GOT FAIRLY FREQUENT MENTION. AMINI, WHO WAS NAMED PRIME MINISTER IN 1961 PARTLY, OBSERVERS THOUGHT, TO INCREASE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEHRAN 7086

THE GOI'S ATTRACTIVENESS TO THE "NEW FRONTIER" WHICH HAD COME INTO POWER IN THE U.S., IS CONSIDERED TO BE SYMPA-

THETIC TO THE OPPOSITIONIST VIEWS OF THE NATIONAL
FRONTIERS. SUGGESTIONS THAT A MAN OF HIS AGE (HE IS 72)
MIGHT BE THE SHAH'S CHOICE TO PRESENT A NEW IMAGE FOR THE
GOI EVIDENCES THE EXTENT TO WHICH BELIEF HAS SPREAD HERE
THAT THERE WILL BE TOLERATION OF MORE OPPOSITIONIST
VIEWS IN IRAN.

10. IN THE COMING WEEKS AND MONTHS WE SHALL BE STUDYING
SUCH EVIDENCE MORE CLOSELY TO SEE WHETHER THE DISSIDENTS RE-
PRESENT A BROADER SPECTRUM OF IRANIAN SOCIETY OR ARE LIMITED
PRIMARILY TO PEOPLE (SOME OF THEM OF ADVANCED AGE) WHOSE
VIEWS ARE DATED AND CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO ELICIT A GREAT
DEAL OF PUBLIC SUPPORT. WE SUSPECT THE SHAH WILL BE
TAKING HIS OWN READINGS OF THIS SITUATION AND PATTERN
THE GOI'S REACTION ACCORDINGLY.
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